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# BULLETIN

OF THE

## AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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### THE A. L. A. AND L. A. CATALOG RULES

**I**MPORTANT cooperative work by zealous and faithful committees has always been a chief characteristic of the A. L. A. The two editions of both the A. L. A. Catalog and the List of subject headings are marked instances, while the work of the Publishing board, growing rapidly in extent and usefulness, is really that of a standing committee.

Before the next number of the *Bulletin* is published another notable committee report will be in press and a particularly happy feature of the work of the Catalog rules committee is the international character of the Code which sums up its seven years of work. The fewer codes of catalog rules the better and it would have been especially regrettable if in lieu of the resultant joint Anglo-American code, two sets of rules should have appeared, embodying the various differences and conflicting usages which in the new code have been almost entirely harmonized. The following members of the Association have served on the Catalog rules committee since its appointment in 1901, under the chairmanship of J. C. M. Hanson of the Library of Congress: C. A. Cutter, Mrs S. C. Fairchild, W. S. Biscoe, A. H. Hopkins, T. F. Currier, Alice B. Kroeger, E. C. Richardson, Nina E. Browne.

A brief account of its work and of the steps that have led to the joint A. L. A. and L. A. Code, seems proper at this time and can best be given by printing below the statement read to the Library Association at its conference in Glasgow on September 19, 1907, by Mr Hanson, the chairman of the committee and a regularly accredited representative of the A. L. A. at the British meeting.

#### MR HANSON'S STATEMENT

Practical suggestions on cooperation in cataloging with its several related questions have not been wanting. I need only refer to Jewett's plan of 1852 and the papers and discussions before the first International library conference of 1877. The suggestions thus thrown out lead to further discussion. Here and there sporadic efforts have been made to carry out some of the plans proposed but without permanent results. While the American Library Association through its Publishing section had begun to issue a few printed cards as early as 1896 it was only in 1900, at the Montreal meeting, that a movement was inaugurated to provide, in the first place, a code of rules which should have the general approval of the Association; secondly, an agency to provide and distribute printed catalog cards on a scale commensurate with the needs of the average library. It was here that the Association turned to the Library of Congress as

possibly furnishing a solution of the latter problem.

Early in 1898, this Library had found itself for the first time installed in a separate building with commodious quarters. It had found itself at the same time confronted by problems which clearly necessitated a reconstruction of its entire catalog system including classification. It was quite natural that under the circumstances, the future possibilities of the library in its relations to other libraries of the country should be considered. It was the only depository for copyrighted books, it secured through exchanges with foreign governments and learned societies and institutions more material than any other American library; it looked forward to large appropriations for purchase of books. It was felt, therefore, that changes in its cataloging rules and methods should be made, as far as practicable, with a view to possible future cooperation with other libraries.

When the American Library Association and the Library of Congress, in the fall of 1900, came to consider the question of agreement on cataloging rules for the purpose of making the national library a distributing centre of catalog cards, it was found, therefore, that points of disagreement were after all not so serious as might have been expected. Some concessions were made on both sides and the results embodied in a draft code issued in 1902. The Committee, to which the revision of the rules had been entrusted, counted among its members the late Mr C. A. Cutter who was then engaged on the 4th edition of his own Rules. It included further the Vice-director of the oldest and largest of the library schools, a director of one of the other schools, representatives of the Publishing board of the Association and of the largest university and reference libraries.

In 1902, the Committee had reached a stage in its consultations which seemed to give assurance of close agreement between its own rules, the 4th edition of Cutter's Rules and a new edition of the New York state library school rules then under contemplation. We felt that this was in itself a notable achievement inasmuch as one or the other of these codes are followed in most American libraries. We were, however, not at all prepared for any immediate extension of the movement for uniformity beyond the limits here designated.

True we had heard in 1902 of the appointment of your committee of thirteen. We were highly flattered when in the fall of that year a request was received for

copies of our draft code. It had, moreover, been mentioned in our meetings that a "rapprochement" between the two committees might be highly advisable. We were however at the time, so occupied with our own troubles that no one had the courage to make any definite proposition, at least not until the Rules should have been revised and put in a more presentable form than the one to be found in our Advance edition. We were at the same time anxiously awaiting the issue of your draft code. This was approximately the situation in the autumn of 1904.

Then came the International conference at St Louis and with it a definite proposal through your official representative at that Conference, Mr Jast, looking to a common code of cataloging rules for England and the United States. It is of course unnecessary to say that the proposal was received with great enthusiasm. It seemed so natural, when once brought face to face with the proposition, that two great countries with a common language and virtually, at least as viewed from an American standpoint, a common literature, should join hands in an effort of this character. It seemed also eminently fitting that the invitation should come from the older country and from you as representatives of that parent stock from which had come so large a share of what was best, not only in our literature but in our library development as well.

Speaking for the American Committee I can say that the invitation to enter into cooperation with you was considered a great honor to which we felt that there was only one response, namely, to carry out our part of the work in the same generous spirit which had characterized your invitation.

As for the negotiations between the two committees it is needless to go into detail. It will be sufficient to state that they were carried on solely by correspondence, there being naturally no opportunities for joint meetings. In spite of this handicap, your Committee was able to report at Bradford in September, a year ago, that their own draft code and that of the American Committee were now practically identical and to recommend that a joint code be now printed. To this report and recommendation you agreed. In May of the present year, the American Committee has in turn presented its report to the American Library Association with a recommendation that the printing of a 1st American edition of the joint code be authorized and that the Committee be instructed to proceed with such further negotiations as

might be necessary in order to dispose of questions of detail likely to come up in connection with the printing of the two editions, the American and the English. The report and recommendation were adopted by the Council and the Rules accepted as the official rules of the Association. The actions here referred to really represent the consummation of the long sought agreement on cataloging rules between English and American libraries.

I cannot conclude a reference to this agreement without expressing here, in behalf of the American Committee, a most cordial appreciation of the kindly and generous way in which your Committee has met our suggestions throughout these consultations. The spirit in which our proposals have invariably been received by them is, in a large measure responsible for the success which has attended the negotiations.

I may be permitted finally to add a brief reference to the international phase of the present agreement.

It is no doubt true that our common language has been a great factor in promoting harmony. Nevertheless, I think that we may venture to say that the agreement will have an important bearing on future efforts towards cooperation in cataloging also in other countries. It is not likely that any considerable undertaking along these lines will be planned hereafter without taking due account of the common code of rules adopted by England and America. I may illustrate my point by a reference to our own work of revision. Among the Rules referred to in the new code is that of the Prussian university and government libraries. It was only natural that the efforts being made in Germany towards a correlation of the catalogs of Prussian university and governmental libraries should have been watched with great interest by those of us who were engaged on similar work. It was felt that the Prussian "Gesamtkatalog" might, in course of time, lead to cooperative efforts which would have an important bearing on related undertakings also outside of Germany. The "Instruktionen für die alphabetischen Kataloge der preussischen Bibliotheken und für den preussischen Gesamtkatalog," published in 1899, with its "Erläuterungen, Nachträge, Beispielzusätze," of 1905, has, therefore, been consulted constantly. While we fully realized that there was little likelihood of agreement on the two fundamental points of difference between German and Anglo-American rules, viz. Entry of anonymous books and Corporate entry, and while the

Committee had not had any correspondence or direct relations with representatives of the German movement, we felt, nevertheless, that it was our duty, in this new code, to take due cognizance of the instructions promulgated by the Prussian ministry of public worship with reference to the "Gesamtkatalog," and in formulating our own decisions to bear in mind the possibility of a gradual extension of international agreement and cooperation. It is only reasonable to suppose that a similar regard will be shown the new joint code which is now about to appear. The compilers or editors of future codes, be they national or international in scope, will all appreciate the importance of adhering, as far as they can, to the lines which we have laid down in these joint rules.

J. C. M. HANSON, Chairman  
A. L. A. Catalog Rules Committee.

#### LIST OF NEW MEMBERS

- Adams, Leta E., Student N. Y. State L. School, Albany, N. Y. 4352.  
Bauschbach, Letta C., Ln. P. L., Galena, Ill. 4325.  
Biscoe, Ellen D., Ln. State Normal School, Cedar Falls, Ia. 4338.  
Bumstead, Frank M., Univ. of California L., Berkeley, Cal. 4348.  
Chanute (Kansas) F. P. L. (Mrs Nora Yockey, Ln.) 4351.  
Emerson, Martha Flagg, Student Simmons Coll. L. School, Boston, Mass. 4331.  
Evans, Mrs H. D. (Mabel Telford), Meza, Ariz. 2222.  
Field, Agnes J., Student N. Y. State L. School, Albany, N. Y. 4356.  
Frick, Eleanor H., American Soc. of Civil Engineers L., N. Y. City. 4332.  
Green, Lola M. B., American Soc. of Civil Engineers L., N. Y. City. 4334.  
Greenman, Edward D., Student N. Y. State L. School, Albany, N. Y. 4357.  
Helbig, Richard E., Asst. Ln. P. L., N. Y. City. 4349.  
Joliet (Ill.) P. L. 4350.  
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Marion (Ohio) P. L. (Mary Leonard, Ln.) 4343.  
Michigan University L. (Theodore W. Koch, Ln.) Ann Arbor, Mich. 4341.  
Minneapolis (Minn.) P. L. (Gratia A. Countryman, Ln.) 4363.  
New York State L. (E. H. Anderson, Director.) Albany, N. Y. 4335.  
New York State Library School. (J. I. Wyer, jr., Vice-Director.) Albany, N. Y. 4336.